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DIRECTORATE OF
INTELLIGENCE

Intelligence Memorandum

ENEMY SUPPLY LOSSES IN CAMBODIA THROUGH 24 MAY

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Directorate of Intelligence
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INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

Enemy Supply Losses In Cambodia Through 24 May

Introduction

This memorandum is the first of a series of weekly updates of the preliminary assessment of enemy supply losses made in the Intelligence Memorandum on enemy supply losses in Cambodia.* The analysis is based on reporting of the first 25 days of Allied ground actions in Cambodia. The judgments of the significance of the losses will necessarily remain tentative until the completion of current operations.

Supply Losses

1. From 30 April through 24 May the enemy lost 6,000 short tons of food, weapons and equipment, and ammunition as indicated in the following tabulation:

Note: This memorandum was produced solely by CIA. It was prepared by the Office of Economic Research and was coordinated with the Office of Current Intelligence and the Director's Special Assistant for Vietnamese Affairs.

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	<u>Short Tons</u>
Class I (food)	4,517
Classes II and IV (weapons and equipment)	143 <u>a/</u>
Class V (ammunition)	1,282
<i>Total</i>	<i>5,942 <u>b/</u></i>

a. This total includes 49 tons of clothing, medical supplies, and communications and personal equipment. It excludes an estimated 556 tons of vehicles and 14 tons of petroleum. These categories were not included in our calculations of enemy stockpiles in Cambodia and have been excluded in this analysis in order to provide comparability of data in making judgments on the extent to which these stockpiles have been drawn down.

b. Losses inflicted by US and South Vietnamese operations. Losses resulting from FANK operations to date are negligible. As of 19 May, the FANK had captured less than one ton of supplies, including 23 rifles, 51 submachineguns, a few rocket launchers, 100 mortar and artillery shells, and 100 grenades.

The losses include 10,940 individual weapons, 1,600 crew-served weapons, 5.1 million rifle rounds, 2.6 million machinegun rounds, 26,750 mortar rounds, and 15,900 rocket rounds. In addition, 264 Communist vehicles have also been captured in Cambodia.

Trends in Supply Losses

2. During the week ending 24 May, 1,406 tons of food, weapons, and ammunition were uncovered by Allied operations, approximately 24% of the total since operations began on 30 April. This represents a moderate dropoff in the tempo of caches discovered -- 201 tons per day during the 18-24 May period compared with 250 tons per day in the 30 April-17 May period. This trend indicates that while Allied operations continue to achieve important gains, they have become less productive

in the amounts of weapons and ammunition being captured. Measured in terms of the average number of tons captured daily, captures of weapons have dropped nearly 25% and ammunition nearly 60%. The average number of tons captured daily is shown in the following tabulation:

	Short Tons	
	<u>30 Apr-17 May</u>	<u>18 May-24 May</u>
Food	184	173
Weapons	4	3
Ammunition	62	25

3. Geographically, the most significant rice captures during the past week occurred in the Parrot's Beak area (Base Areas 706/367), Fishhook (Base Areas 352/353), and Base Area 351 (see the map). Rice losses in those areas represented about three-fourths of the total increase for that category with nearly one-half of all the rice being uncovered in Base Area 351 alone.

4. Total weapons losses during the week increased by only about 19 tons, attributable to small caches found in the Parrot's Beak, Fishhook, and Base Areas 701 and 704.

5. Only 175 tons of ammunition were uncovered during the past week. The largest single cache -- 82 tons -- was reported from Base Area 704 which previously had no reported ammunition finds. The huge caches discovered early in the operations in Cambodia in Base Area 351 still dominate the ammunition statistics, accounting for about 45% of the total of 1,280 tons.

6. There are probably several reasons for the overall slackening of supply discoveries. First, with each passing day the enemy has more time to reposition supplies before the arrival of Allied forces. Second, the first caches discovered undoubtedly represented those held in fairly accessible areas. Third, large numbers of

US troops have been withdrawn from Cambodia. However, as new information becomes available through the exploitation of captured documents and the interrogation of prisoners, it is entirely possible that major new caches will be located.

Significance of Supply Losses

7. Enemy losses in Cambodia compared with our calculations of enemy stockpiles in Cambodia are given in the tabulation below:

Class of Supply	Short Tons		Losses as a Percent of Estimated Enemy Stockpiles
	Estimated Enemy Stockpiles in Cambodia Apr 1970 ^a /	Enemy Losses in Cambodia 30 Apr-25 May	
Food	6,200-10,370	4,517	44-73
Weapons and equipment	1,600- 2,700	143	5-9
Ammunition	1,350- 2,255	1,282	57-95
<i>Total</i>	<i>9,150-15,330</i>		

a. The range in the estimates reflects the uncertainty about the size of the enemy's strategic stockpiles in Cambodia.

8. Since our initial evaluation of enemy ammunition losses, the substantial downward revision from the field on the amount of ammunition captured which was 50-caliber and larger considerably lowered the total tonnage of ammunition reported captured. The revised data now indicate that the enemy has lost ammunition equivalent to 57%-95% of estimated stockpiles. If ammunition of 50 caliber and larger, which still accounts for a large share of the captured ammunition, is subtracted from the total -- on the grounds that it is mainly used for antiaircraft purposes and is not typical of the firepower of a VC or NVA battalion in South Vietnam -- the ammunition losses represent about 38%-63% of estimated stockpiles. The relatively small numbers of rockets and mortars discovered thus far in Cambodia suggest that large quantities of rockets and mortars remain in Communist stockpiles. Enemy losses of mortar and rocket rounds are still

much below the losses suffered in northern Laos last year, as shown in the following tabulation:

	Rounds	
	North Laos 1969	Cambodia 1970
Mortar	143,000	27,000
Rocket	26,000 <u>a/</u>	16,000 <u>a/</u>

a. Including about 8,000 large rockets (107 mm and larger) that were captured in northern Laos compared with 1,100 in Cambodia.

9. The above comparison is surprising because we would expect the military situation in South Vietnam would call for larger reserves of rockets for the war in South Vietnam than the war in northern Laos. The relatively low level of captures of this type of ammunition would indicate that the enemy's ability to conduct standoff attacks by fire has not yet been seriously degraded.

10. The revised data on specific types of ammunition losses as of 24 May are given in the tabulation below:

Ammunition by Type	Rounds
Small arms (less than 50 caliber)	5,094,288
50 caliber or larger	2,592,504
Grenades	12,309
Antiaircraft artillery	127,353
Mortars	26,749
Rockets (large)	1,090
Rockets (small)	14,799
Recoilless rifle	18,552
Mines	2,826

11. Enemy weapons losses remain low and are equal to only about 20% of the amount captured in

South Vietnam last year. Food losses are the largest loss category but are far less significant than the enemy losses of ammunition. The captured rice represents about six months' external resupply requirements for the enemy in southern South Vietnam. Our judgment still stands that the loss can be replaced from the recently harvested rice stocks in Cambodia to which the enemy has access.

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Summary

17. During the first 25 days of operations in Cambodia, US and South Vietnamese forces have captured an impressive amount of enemy supplies. The 6,000 tons uncovered thus far is equal to about three-fourths of the total supply losses sustained by the enemy in South Vietnam during all of 1969. About 76% of the losses in the present Cambodian operations consist of food, about 22% of ammunition, and the remainder of weapons and equipment. Supply losses of all classes are estimated at from 40% to 65% of the stockpiles judged to be in Cambodia at the start of Allied operations.

18. Important new caches continue to be discovered, but the overall tempo of supply captures slackened somewhat this past week -- from an average of nearly 250 tons daily during 30 April-17 May to just over 200 tons daily during 18-24 May. The ammunition component of these losses dropped from an average of 62 tons daily during the earlier

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period to 25 tons daily last week. Looking closely at the mix of captured supplies suggests that Allied operations have yet to tap important caches.

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20. There is little doubt that the resupply effort will pose considerable problems for the enemy. However, replacing the present level of supply losses will not pose an insurmountable burden on the enemy's logistical apparatus and could be accomplished within a few months. From a logistics point of view, the stockpiles in South Vietnam are probably adequate to permit the Communists to undertake military activities on the scale of recent months. This includes shelling, sapper attacks, limited ground probes, and even fairly intensive combat action from time to time -- if the enemy is willing to accept the casualties that such a strategy would entail.

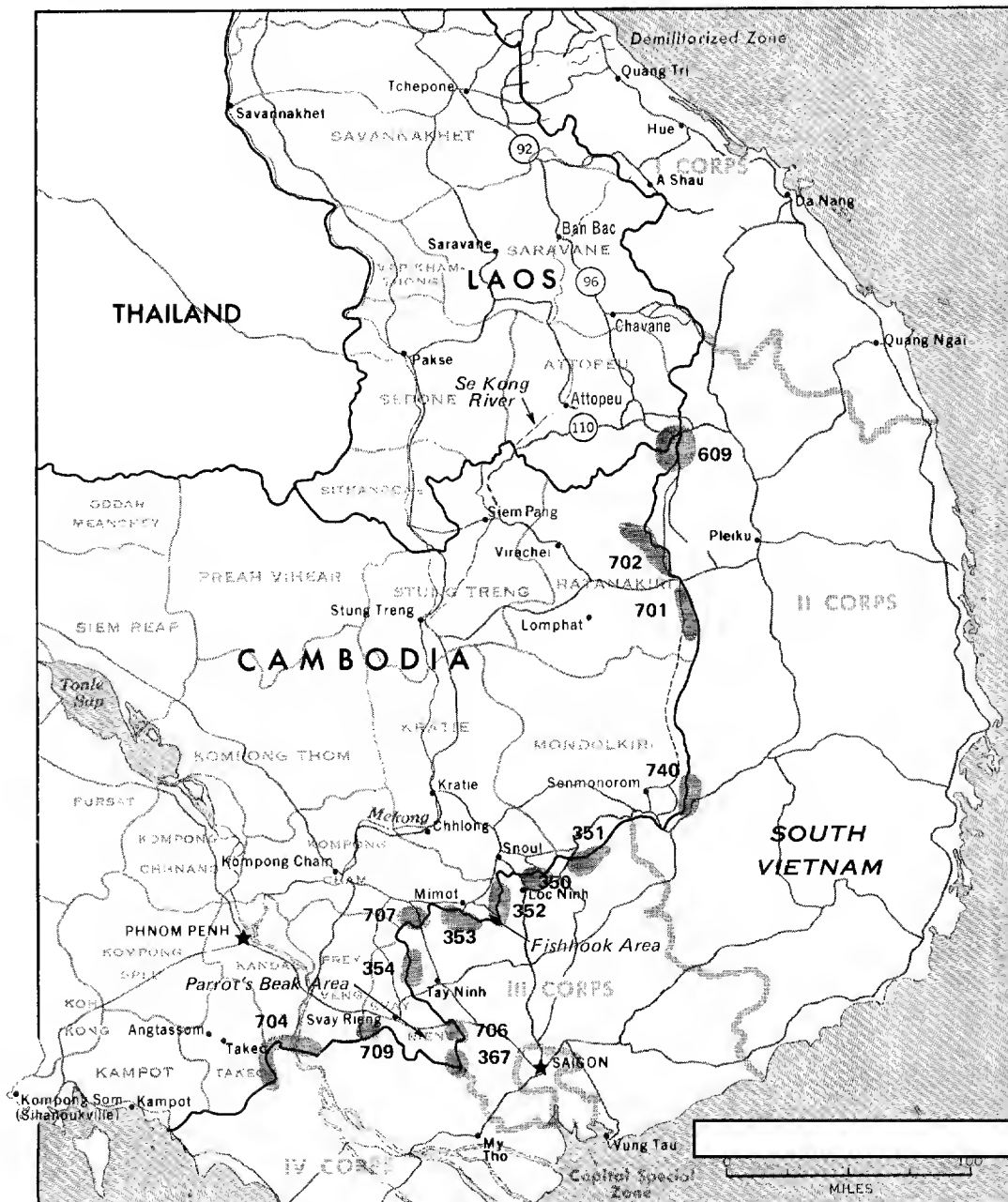
Cumulative Results of US and ARVN Operations in Cambodia
(as of 24 May 2000 Hours EDT)

Supply Item	Parrot's Beak	Fish-hood	Base Areas							Terminated Operations a/	Total
			702	701	740	351	350	704/709	704		
Individual weapons	1,139	4,442	842	476	5	1,087	221	729	716	1,285	10,942 b/
Crew-served weapons	293	625	37	136	3	114	29	113	84	184	1,618 b/
Rice (tons)	713	2,124	602	89	147	520	57	30	44	191	4,517
Vehicles	12	194	3	0	7	35	2	8	0	3	264
Ammunition (tons)	207	283	24	9	Negl.	561	22	25	82	69	1,282

a. Thus far two operations have been terminated -- one in the vicinity of the Parrot's Beak area and one against Base Area 354. Current field reporting is aggregated in a manner which does not permit the allocation to the appropriate areas of origin of the supply losses reported under the "terminated operations" heading.

b. Represents the loss of about 94 tons of arms.

VC/NVA Base Areas Along Cambodian Border



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